



Town of Amherst

Department of Public Works

2005 Water Quality Report

Dear Customer:

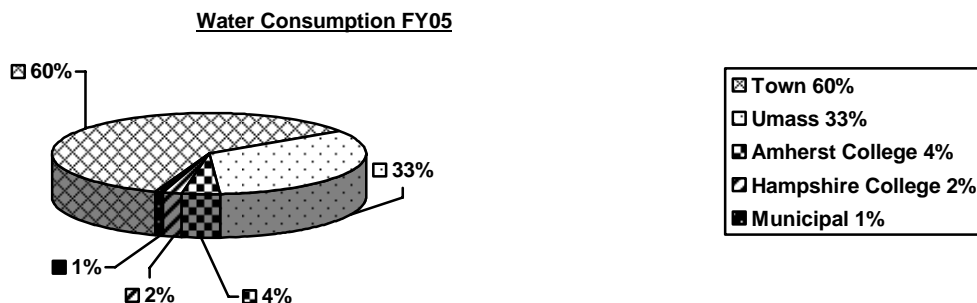
In the year 2005, drinking water supplied by the Town of Amherst (PWS ID#1008000) met all U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and state drinking water health standards. This annual report will detail where town water comes from, what it contains, and the risks water testing and treatment are designed to prevent. This is the eighth year this report has been disseminated. Although much of the information in this report is required, we will supplement those elements with information of interest to the public.

1. Water Sources

The Town currently has seven sources that contribute to meeting the water demand: Atkins Reservoir, the Pelham Reservoir System, the South Amherst Wells (#1 & #2), The Brown Well (#3), the Lawrence Swamp Well (#4) and the Bay Road Well (#5). Both surface water supplies, Atkins and Pelham, and Wells 1, 2 & 3 are used year round to satisfy the required demands. These five sources supply approximately 90% of the total water produced. Wells #4 and #5 operate during high demand periods and summer months when the reservoirs are low. In 2002, a Source Water Assessment (SWAP) was completed on the Amherst water system by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection. This SWAP report assesses the susceptibility of the Town's drinking water sources to contaminants and outlines recommendations for drinking water protection. A copy is available at the Department of Public Works and online at www.mass.gov/dep/

2. Water Consumption Data

The average daily water consumption for the year 2005 was 3.59 million gallons, with a peak demand of 5.128 million gallons on September 15, 2005. In 2005, the University of Massachusetts completed a campus wide survey and implemented changes which have resulted in greater than 25% reduction in water consumption.



3. Substances Found in Tap Water

In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the MADEP and EPA prescribe regulations that limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water that must provide the same protection for public health. Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that water poses a health risk. More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 800-426-4791, or online at www.epa.gov. Sources of drinking water (both tap water and bottled water) include rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, reservoirs, springs, and wells. As water travels over the surface of the land or through the ground, it dissolves naturally occurring minerals and, in some cases, radioactive material, and can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity. Contaminants that may be present in source water include:

Microbial Contaminants- such as viruses and bacteria, which may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, and wildlife.

Inorganic Contaminants- such as salts and metals, which can be naturally-occurring or result from urban storm water runoff, industrial or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining and farming.

Pesticides and Herbicides- may come from many sources such as agriculture, urban storm water runoff, and residential uses.

Organic Chemical Contaminants- including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, which are by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production, and can also come from gas stations, urban storm water runoff, and septic systems.

Radioactive Contaminants- which can be naturally occurring or be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

4. Vulnerability

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immuno-compromised persons such as persons with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, persons who have undergone organ transplants, people with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders, some elderly, and some infants can be particularly at risk for infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. EPA/CDC guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by cryptosporidium and other microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (1-800-426-4791).

5. Lead & Copper

Elevated levels of lead and copper in drinking water usually indicate water that has corrosive qualities and may attack the household plumbing. Most homes use copper piping, and the solder used to hold the fixtures together might contain lead (lead in solder was discontinued in 1989). All water supplies in Amherst are treated for corrosion control by the addition of sodium hydroxide to reduce corrosion. In the last required sampling done in 2005, water samples from thirty-nine homes were analyzed, and the results are summarized in the table below. Only 1 sample was found to have lead levels over the action level (AL).

Substance	MCLG	Highest Level	90% Value*	Action Level
Lead	0 ppb	290 ppb	2.9 ppb	15 ppb
Copper	1.3 ppm	0.29 ppm	.097 ppm	1.3 ppm

*The 90% Value is the value below which 90% of the data falls. If the 90% value is below the AL, no further action is necessary

6. Treatment Plant Efficiency

All water from surface water supplies is treated by coagulation of the insoluble contaminants and then filtered through a fine sand-like material. The effectiveness of this process is measured by the cloudiness of the water (turbidity) leaving the treatment plant. Turbidity occurs naturally as a result of soil runoff due to turbulence in the tributaries that supply the reservoir. The following turbidity data illustrates the daily average performance of the two water treatment plants that serve Amherst. Drinking Water Regulations require the turbidity to be less than 0.3 in 95% of the samples.

Samples are taken every 4 hours	Raw Water Turbidity		Treated Water Turbidity	
	Annual Average	Maximum Reading	Annual Average	Maximum Reading
Centennial	0.50	2.20	0.08	0.27
Atkins	0.49	1.20	0.10	0.19

Note: All units measured in NTU= Nephelometric Turbidity Units

7. Water Quality

The following table lists all of the drinking water contaminants that we detected during the calendar year of this report. The presence of contaminants in the water does not necessarily indicate that the water poses a health risk. Unless otherwise noted, the data presented in this table is from testing done in the calendar year of the report. Sometimes the EPA or MA DEP requires us to monitor for certain contaminants less than once per year because the concentrations of these contaminants do not change frequently. All water sources are analyzed for the following chemical substances: inorganics (metals and salts), nitrate, nitrite, lead, copper, disinfection byproducts, volatile organic substances (petroleum and solvents) and synthetic organic compounds (herbicides and pesticides). All of these substances that were detected were below the federal limits. The table below indicates contaminants that were detected in your drinking water. None of these substances were above the levels designated by the Safe Drinking Water Act as being a health risk. The following definitions will help explain the water quality table:

Important Drinking Water Definitions:

Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL): The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLGs as feasible using the best available treatment technology.

Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG): The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLGs allow for a margin of safety.

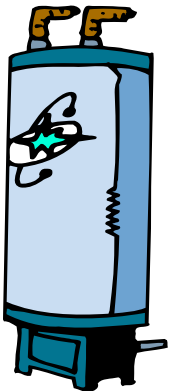
Treatment Technique (TT): A required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.

Action Level (AL): The concentration of a contaminant, which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements that a water system must follow.

Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level (MRDL): The highest level of a disinfectant allowed in drinking water. There is convincing evidence that addition of a disinfectant is necessary for control of microbial contaminants (e.g. chlorine, chloramines, chlorine dioxide).

Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal (MRDLG): The level of a drinking water disinfectant below which there is no known expected risk to health. MRDLGs do not reflect the benefits of the use of disinfectants to control microbial contaminants.

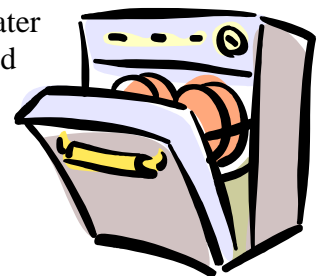
I. Regulated Substances	Date Tested	Unit	MCL	MCLG	Highest Detected Level	Range of Data	Major Sources	Violation
a) Inorganic Substances								
Fluoride	11/17/2005	ppm	4	N/A	1.6	0.10 - 1.6	Added to prevent tooth decay	NO
Barium	5/23/2005	ppm	2	2	0.16	0.01 - 0.16	Erosion of natural deposits	NO
Nitrate (measured as nitrogen)	7/7/2005	ppm	10	10	3.8	0.05 – 3.8	Runoff from fertilizer ; Leaching from septic tanks, Sewage; Erosion of natural deposits	NO
b) Disinfection Contaminants								
Total Trihalomethanes	Quarterly	ppb	80		47	2.0 – 47	Byproduct from chlorination	NO
Haloacetic Acids	Quarterly	ppb	60		49	26 – 49	Byproduct from chlorination	NO
Combined Chlorine	2 Times a Month	ppm	4.0	0	3.5	0.1 – 3.5	Applied Disinfectant	NO
c) Radioactive Contaminants								
Gross Alpha (pCi/l)	9/24/2003	pCi/l	15	0	0.66	0.26 - 0.66	Erosion from natural deposits	NO
Radium 226 & 228 (pCi/l)	9/24/2003	pCi/l	5	0	0.75	0.21 - 0.75	Decay of natural and manmade deposits	NO
II. Unregulated Substances	Date Tested	Unit	MCL	MCLG	Highest Detected Level	Range of Data	Major Sources	Violation
Sodium	7/22/2005	ppm	None	None	9.9	7.7 – 9.9	Road salt; Chlorine; Lye	NO
Sulfate	5/25/2005	ppm	None	None	34	5.3 – 34	Natural deposits; Landfills; Dumps;	NO



Do you have white particles in your kitchen faucet screen?

If so, it may be from the dip tube in your hot water tank. Some dip tubes are made from plastic that breaks down under high water temperatures causing white particles to break off. The problem can be easily solved by having a plumber replace the plastic dip tube with a copper one.

Installing a new dishwasher? Many dishwashers now have a water hardness setting on them. The water in Amherst is considered soft (the range for soft being 0 – 60).



For more information, call Robert Pariseau,
Director of Water Resources, Amherst DPW at (413) 259-3115
Email: pariseau@amherstma.gov
This report is also available on the web at www.amherstma.gov

Frequently Asked Questions and Helpful Tips:

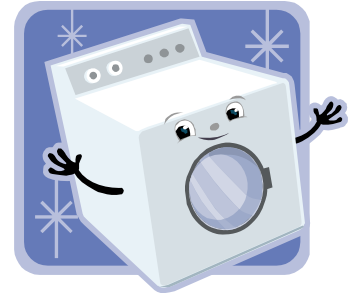


Have you ever had brown water come out of your faucet? If you turn on your faucet and the water is brown, just let the water run a few minutes until the water runs clear. Some common causes for brown water are water main flushing or hydrants being open by Public Works or the Fire Dept.

Why do I have low water pressure?

If you have a filter on your faucet or an in-line service filter, they may need changing according to manufacturers instructions. Check the screens on your faucets to see if they are clogged.

Do you leave the water to your washing machine on all the time? Shut the water off when you're not using the machine. It could cost a lot of money and time if the hose breaks and you end up with a basement full of water. Also, change the hoses on the washing machine every five years.



It's gardening time again! To get information on watering conservation and plants native to our area, check out the following websites www.awwa.org and www.h2ouse.org.

**Town of Amherst
Department of Public Works
586 South Pleasant Street
Amherst, MA 01002-2542**

这份报告中有些重要的信息，讲到关于您所在社区的水的品质。请您找人翻译一下，或者请能看得懂这份报告的朋友给您解释一下。

El informe contiene información importante sobre la calidad del agua en su comunidad. Tradúzcalo o hable con alguien que lo entienda bien.

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Town of Amherst 2005 Drinking Water Quality Report